

PACKAGE THOUGHTS

How many us & Vese casualties when this given to President Nixon?

- Some mention of phase II in regards to ARVN - 402

to why in Paris - GVN

339

Politically the enemy's prospects are brighter; despite some surface calm in the SVNese political system, it is a changing & highly fragile device.

The GVN political system as it's now is probably inadequate for a pol confrontation with the enemy. SV leadership remains divided & uninspiring. The Vese nationalists have no nat'l pol organization to match the Comets. Without an effective pol org, the lower level & local nat'l list leadership is vulnerable to disintegration if the tide should appear to be moving in favor of the c'mists. Further, there is no large disciplined GVN structure in the rural areas to match the VC org. & despite allied efforts to destroy the VC org, it will probably remain a viable structure for some time.

Why is the DRF in Paris?

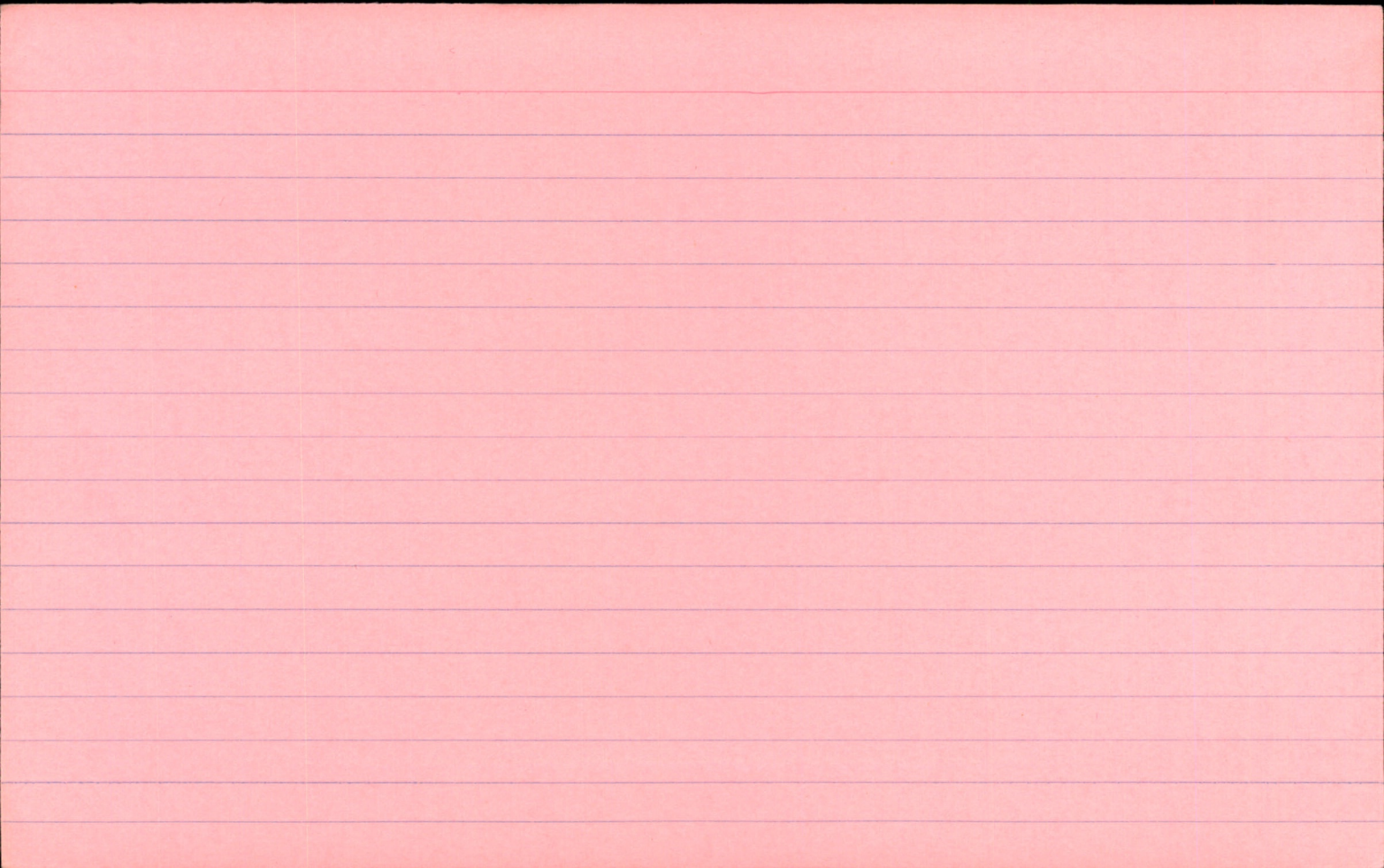
paraphrased

p. 77 Cannot win - although is not losing

Only way for NLF to gain power in SVN is by negotiation

US public is tiring

Need to reverse 1954



Damage to Civ?

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The adequacy of information on the overall scale & incidence of damage to civs. by air & artillery & looting and misbehavior by RVNAF.

The overall level of combat damage undoubtedly has been high. For example: the damage to Vese cities at Tet was considerable; there have been over two million refugees in SVN since 1964 - many of these were caused by combat activity; the US Navy alone reports they have destroyed almost 35,000 structures & damaged about 43,000 since 1964. While much of the destruction has been unavoidable due to enemy provocations & tactics, undoubtedly some destruction could have and can be avoided.

-- On occasion, P Thieu makes a ~~mistake~~ verbal slip by referring to some gov - institution by its name during the Diem period. He has been quoted as to his belief that Diem ran an efficient administration. However, P Thieu has also given indications of his resolution to avoid the political Achilles heel of the Diem regime, its refusal to share power, & develop a political base....

In summary, there is a gradual expansion of the pol. arena to include additional elements & to give more power to legitimately elected reps of the people... A primary factor in this is, of course, the delicate balance between enough US support to avoid collapse & a shortage to stimulate Vietnamese action to handle problems alone.

Thieu

- Am influ. on Vietnamese politics

492-93

In considering the prospects for changes in the GVN & Am. leverage thereon it would be well to consider the proposition that the records of Am exp. in VN is one that indicates a signal failure to direct the evolution of Vietnamese pol. life into desired channels. It is only at the outer limits, i.e. getting rid of Pres. Ngo Dinh Diem or, since 31 March 1968, raising serious doubts about Am. willingness to continue the war, that sufficient leverage has apparently been exerted to markedly influence but not direct the course of pol. events internally.

... the strong central position of the President in institutional terms as provided by an election process has afforded P. Thieu, starting with his base in the mil, the opportunity to consolidate his power & reduce the influence of his chief rivals Vice P. N. Ky and the generals who oppose him.
over

He has skillfully permitted the legislature (Upper & Lower House)
to play a sig. role in the formulation of Govt policies & has
created the broadest coalition of rule in SV's checked
existence as a sovereign state.

V'se elites

Thieu & elections

455-76

... constitutional order whose legit is barely accepted even by the elite who emerged victorious in its first elections...

fractured char. of V'se pol. org.

... Otherwise, energies are focused upon a perpetual competitive struggle to gain status & dominance in V'se pol. life without regard to the damage done to the nascent constitutional structure. In this regard, the consolidation of the Thieu presidency can be seen as a favorable offsetting stabilizing trend, as can the development of the leg. (Upper & Lower House) as a deliberative body with real powers to influence gov'tal action.

Domino theory

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effect of (mist takeover in SVN

One view (INR) holds that such a settlement would be likely to bring Cambodia & Laos into Hanoi's orbit at a fairly early stage, but that these developments would not necessarily unhinge the rest of SE Asia. The judgment here is that Hanoi would be preoccupied, for a ~~long~~ time at least, with the task of consolidating (mist rule in SVN & even in Laos & Cambodia. The (mists would rely in the first instance on political rather than military pressure to alter the situation in their favour. Elsewhere (mist political & military assets probably would not be immediately strengthened, nor would the (mists be likely to ~~rely~~ rely more heavily on armed violence than at present. Although neutralist sentiment would increase in several countries & US prestige would suffer, these developments would not cause SE Asian leaders to be

panicked into precipitate change in policy, although the degree of their steadfastness wd depend on the role the US decided to play in post-war SE Asia. An argument used in support of this assessment is that many of the current crop of leaders are in sympathy with & fully committed to current US objectives relating to the security of SE Asia.

What will impact be of loss of SVN on rest of S.E.Asia?

will come

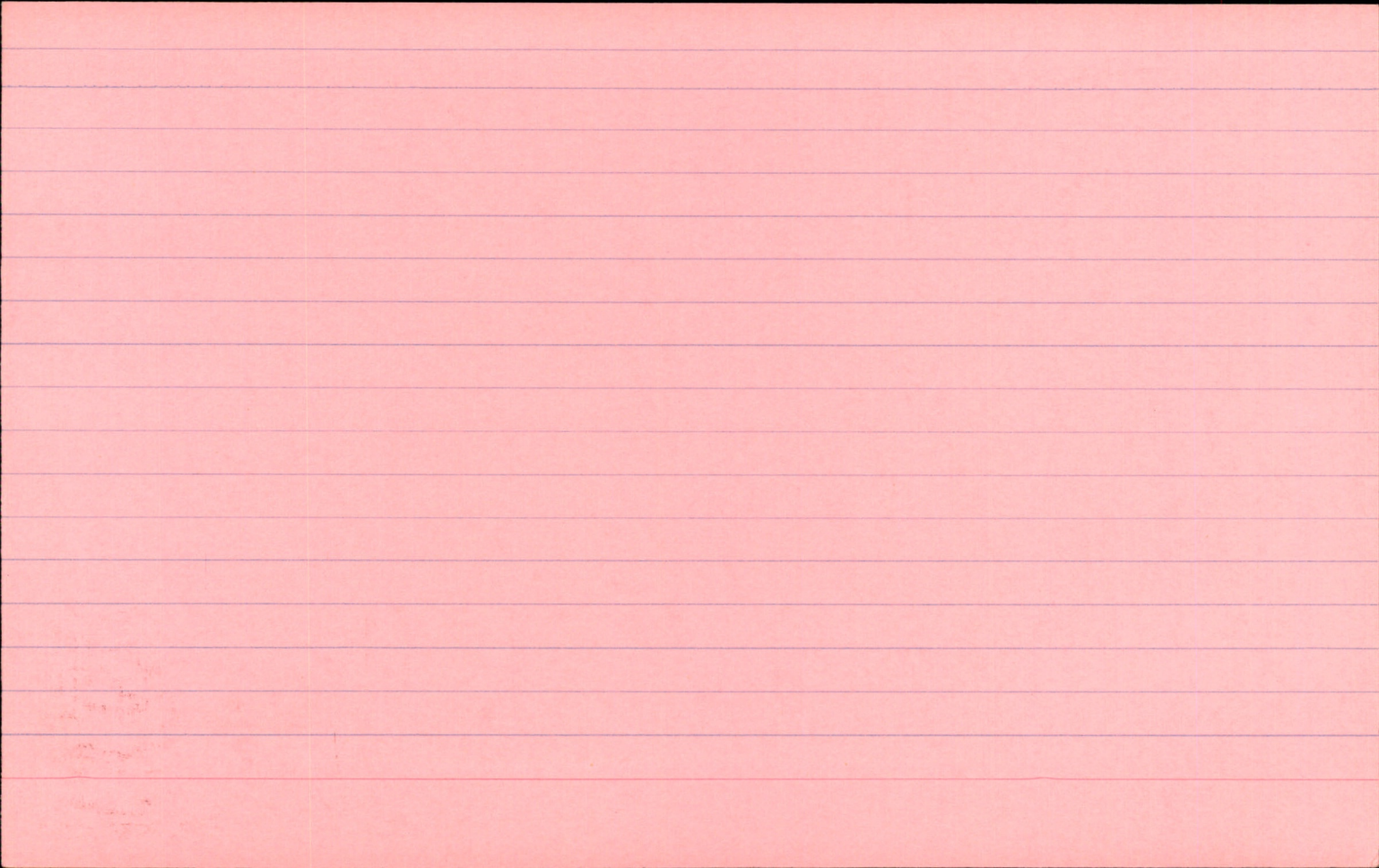
1. Laos and Cambodia/in Hanoi's orbit but not necessarily.the rest of Southeast Asia. N N will be using time for consolidation

or

2. Stimulate NVN to greater activity unless US makes major commitment."NVN does Peking's and Moscow's work."

Possible Thai accomodation unless US makes major commitment.

Concl. Communists would increase pressure and no-Coms could not resist



A solution favorable to Communists would not unhinge SE Asia. Maybe Laos and Cambodia. NVN will spend time consolidating.

Neutralism would increase.

"These SE Asian leaders will not be panicked into precipitous policy changes, depending on US intentions."

p.87 Most governments could not move decisively against insurgents

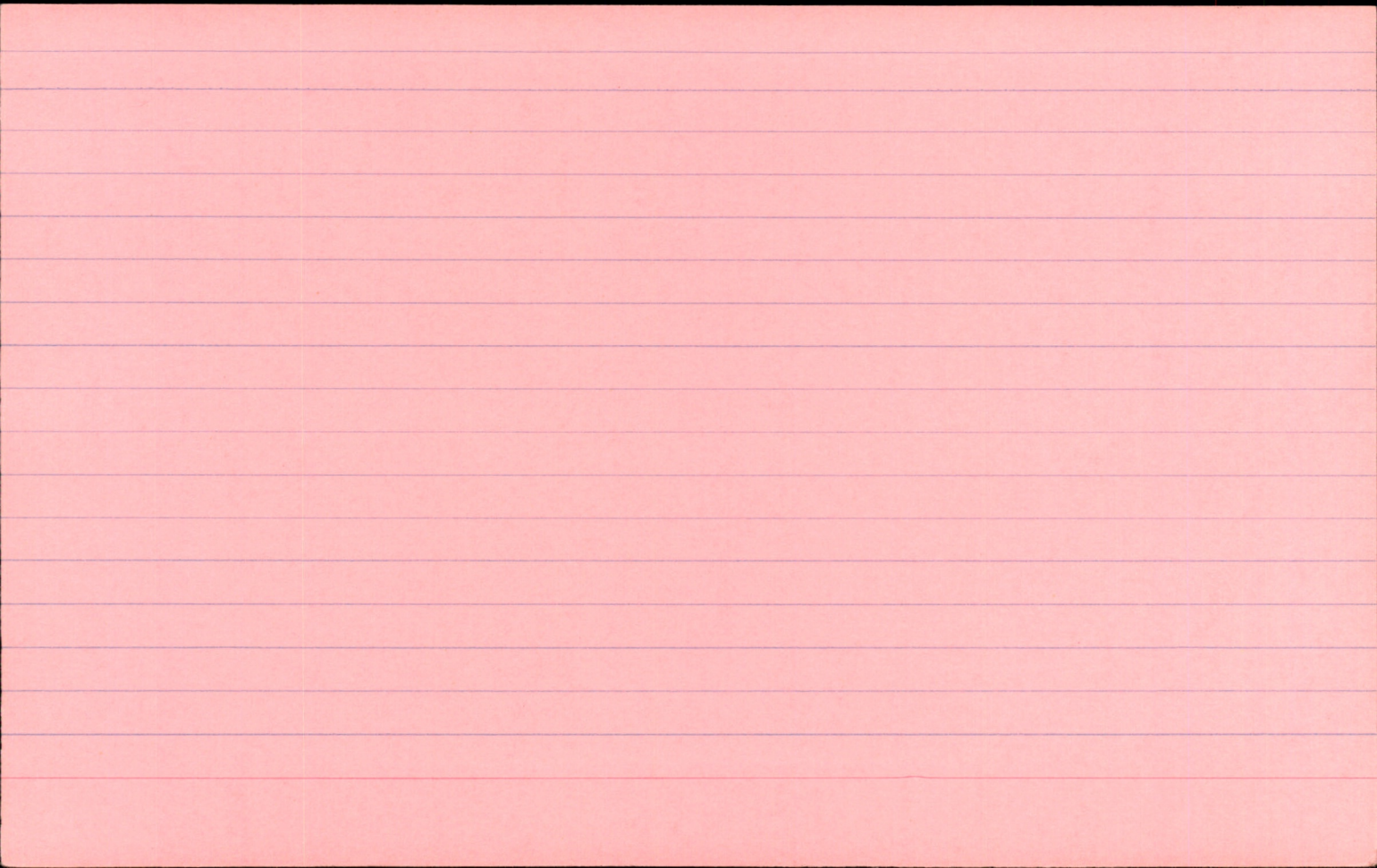
DOMINOES p. 345 OSD

paraphrased

Differing evaluations (NIE ~~5x~~ 50-68)

"Outcome in SVN" not only answer. Other factors determining SEAsia outcome if there is a "bad" ~~sxxx~~ solution:

- 1: NVN & Chinese postures re supporting insurgencies
2. Degree of involvement of Japan, USSR, INDIA, Australia, UK, France
- 3/ Individual reactions of countries to their specific internal situations



B-52's producing casualties?
disrupting operations?

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... There is little evidence to suggest that these H1S missions have succeeded in inflicting a scale of losses on the VC/LVA sufficient to significantly disrupt tactical operations or to force the Coms to alter their basic strategy for SVN. To some extent, moreover, the level of the effectiveness of the H1S missions does diminish as the enemy develops tactics to adjust to their destructive potential. Indeed, captured documents & PW & rallier statements often refer to early warning systems & experimentation with types of shelters & methods to avoid recurring patterns in B-52 strikes

Effect of laotian interdiction bombing?

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In reducing the capacity of the enemy logistic system?

The bombing has clearly imposed serious strains on the enemy's infiltration & logistic capabilities. It has made the movement far more difficult & no doubt slower than would be the case if there were no bombing. Also, it has probably reduced the potential flow of supplies that Hanoi could have put into SVN. However, despite our efforts to choke off the ~~flow~~ flow of supplies, the enemy has made effective use of by-passes, portages, water routes, night movement, additional trucks, & non-motorized transport, & has manage not only to keep the roads open & supplies moving but also to expand & improve ~~the~~ his logistics network. In short, air interdiction efforts in Laos do not appear to have weakened in any major way Communist capabilities to wage an

agressive & protracted campaign in SVN as well as to support
military operations vs RLG forces in Laos itself.

Laotian interdiction - in destroying material in transit?

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Until mid-1968, the Laotian interdiction bombing campaign concentrated on destroying trucks carrying material from NVN through the Laotian panhandle to SVN. While this bombing placed heavy strains on NVN's logistical capabilities, these obstacles did not prevent Hanoi from maintaining a flow of supplies sufficient to accommodate an expansion of Communist strength & an intensification of Communist military operations in the South, as demonstrated by the events of 1968. In mid-1968 the Allies changed the emphasis of the interdiction effort from destruction of material on trucks to blocking so-called "non-bypassable choke points," hoping in this fashion to stop the flow of material south. While the present emphasis on choke points continues to hamper the enemy's ability to move supplies, truck movement in the Laotian panhandle is at the same high level this January as it was last
over

January, suggesting that once again the Allied effort is only taxing the Communist flow of material. As long as the Communists wish to pay this price, they can continue to move material South.

bombing of NVN - significance of strains on DRV

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....

Unfortunately, the available intelligence indicators were relatively silent about the sig of these strains, i.e., about their cumulative ability to deter Hanoi from political & military policies unacceptable to the US. In theory, there was an upper limit to NVN's capacity simultaneously to continue the defense of the North & the pig-unit war in the South. The bombing undoubtedly pushed Hanoi closer to ~~the~~ that limit, but it was not possible to determine precisely (1) where the limit lay, & (2) how far from it Hanoi was at any given time. Hanoi's decision to change from protracted war to the Tet offensive & then to negotiations may be seen as indications it was approaching that limit, but it obviously still had considerable reserve capacity at that time.

Effect of Bombing NVN

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What did become clear during the course of the bombing was that the NVNese had not been paralyzed. Hanoi found a variety of ways to minimize & adapt to the strains of the bombing. Foreign aid was perhaps the most important single element in this adaptation, but the striking tenacity of the NVese leadership & the disciplined & fatalistic response of the NVese people were of equal importance. Despite increasingly heavy bombing, the North continued to function. A high level of imports continued to be received & distributed, permitting ~~NVA~~ NVN to serve as "the great rear" for "the great frontline" in the South - the infiltration of men & supplies continued to increase from 1965 to the present.

Bombing of North -
manpower problems.

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The overall result therefore, was that the manpower situation began to weigh more & more heavily on Hanoi, until eased considerably by the March 31 bombing limitation. It should be noted, however, that there is no evidence that manpower shortages in themselves were becoming acute enough to prevent Hanoi from continuing its policies.

Bombing of the North -
economic aid?

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The degree of relief provided by Soviet & Chinese aid cannot be quantified, but its importance is suggested by the fact that, whereas the bombing destroyed capital stock, military facilities, & current production in WWV worth nearly \$500 million, Soviet & Chinese aid during this period was nearly \$2.9 billion, nearly 6 times as much.

* Bombing of North -

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was essential imports - how much by rail or road if
sea denied & strong effort
even made to interdict ground
transport?

~~On the other hand~~

The NVese surprised many observers, & confounded many predictions,
by holding the North together & simultaneously sending ever-increasing
amounts of supplies & personnel into the South during $3\frac{1}{2}$ years
of bombing. It is clear that the bombing campaign, as conducted,
did not live up to the expectations of many of its proponents.
With this experience in mind, there is little reason to believe that
new bombing will accomplish what previous bombings failed to do,
unless it is conducted with much greater intensity & readiness to defy
criticism & risk of escalation.

bombing NVN - ¹⁷⁷
action of DRV to reduce ~~outlets~~ vulnerability of Hanoi -

Thus beginning in early 1965, an extensive civil defense program was devised, which eventually provided some form of bomb shelter for virtually the entire NVese pop. ~~Shelter programs~~

public shelters, tunnels, individual shelters, earthenwork tunnels leading from industrial plants, trenches near rice fields for agric. workers

rate of attrition & who controls it: Vietnamization 100

... we believe that to a considerable extent, the Coms are able to control the rate of attrition of their forces. First, they have retained a surprising degree of tactical initiative, even during periods of intense fighting. A DoD study, for example, has concluded that perhaps as many as $3/4$ ths of the engagements in SVN occur at VC/NVA tactical initiative. In addition to choosing the timing of the engagements the enemy is able to determine the type of attack, ranging from a costly assault on a major urban center to a relatively inexpensive harassment of a village or hamlet. Despite improvements in US/ARVN tactical planning, the NVA/VC have also proven that they can often break contact and escape into base areas or sanctuaries either within or outside SVN when the fighting in specific engagements has become too intense. Indeed, Communist tactical

planning, even since 1965 when the character of the fighting changed significantly, continues to place high priority on swift, surprise attacks, followed by quick withdrawals.

Finally, the communists retain the option of avoiding contact, again, even during periods of intense offensive operations by our side. For example, DOD studies of combat statistics show little relationship between the number & scale of Allied operations and the rate of estimated enemy combat deaths. Instead, such studies have found a strong relationship between the rate of NVA/VC attacks & their estimated casualties: VC/NVA combat deaths have been high during the periods of their offensives & have dropped during the cyclical so-called "combat lulls", regardless of the level of Allied military operations.

transport & supplies - ~~to~~ Cambodia

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In our view, the Communists clearly have in the overland route a functioning logistic's system in being which is capable of satisfying most of their needs & which is completely under their control, & it is therefore doubtful that they would place their main logistic's channel under Cambodian control & make it ~~at~~ vulnerable to Sihanouk's will & to ^{the} political pressures in Phnom Penh.

The Vietnamese Army has not escaped from its conventional warfare mold. Both in its military tactics and in its relations with the people it has all too often acted counter to the basic principles of counter insurgency rather than in support of them.

While some broadening would clearly be desirable, we do not believe the present regional balance should be upset nor should Huong be replaced -- which limits what changes can actually be made at this~~xxxx~~ point. On the other hand, changes that are inconsequential politically could create an unfortunate picture of continuing~~xxxxxxxx~~ division and weakness within the GVN.

On balance, we think the only "political" changes feasible at present would be the inclusion of relatively "safe" party leaders and former Presidential/Vice Presidential candidates such as RDV leader Ha Thuc Ky, or former Vice-Presidential candidate and still respected Phan Quang Dan, although he does not have a major political following now. Any attempts to include more militant "opposition" or "neutralist" elements would risk serious Northern/Catholic/RVNAF reaction. We would probably get nowhere if we attempted now to encourage such wider participation in any case and might merely confirm suspicions in certain Vietnamese leaders' minds that we are working for a "peace cabinet" or government of transition. This could unsettle the issue further.

"VICTORY" NSS # 1 p 160

To many, "victory" has meant the outright defeat of communist forces (both Viet.Cong. & NVA) or at least such heavy attrition of them that no alternative remained but their total and permanent withdrawal. It has also meant the destruction or dissolution of the entire communist political apparatus. There is now growing realization that victory in these ~~terms~~ terms is unattainable and that the inexorable trend is toward some compromise settlement of hostilities and some kind of political competition thereafter. In this situation, a strong non-communist political role becomes a necessity for any satisfactory outcome.

P.160

Any reduction in the level of our own military effort without a corresponding reduction in presence and activity of North Vietnamese forces may reduce the likelihood that the GVN would work toward political mobilization. (SKS note: on p. on p. 160 "political mobilization" is considered to be the most critical type of governmental "change" needed to obtain "victory".)

"VICTORY" NSS #1 P. 161

In general, the GVN would not seem to run unacceptable risks in making or attempting any of these ~~sga~~ changes (see note below); the problem, rather, is whether the GVN has the will and the ability to make them and whether they can be made in time to do much good. Some risks have already been noted possibly attending any significant effort at broadening the GVN at the national level. Area where US influence may be required have also been indicated (in Question 22).

(Note: The "changes, so necessary to "victory" are broadening the GVN, merit system, and political mobilization?)

In general terms, US influence in the political sphere has often been misunderstood and its impact at times overrated. Our support for governments and programs has been interpreted as support for their leaders of the moment or their initiators (e.g., Nguyen Khanh, Nguyen Cao Ky, Nguyen Duc Thang), whether or not this was the case. And there are many politicians outside the GVN who profess to believe that the Embassy and CAS are behind every shift in policy, change in personnel, or another political development even when this is patently not the case. These circumstances argue for caution and circumspection as we seek to wield political influence, and for a sure understanding of what the exercise of such influence can entail--e.g. our responsibility for what follows after we intervene, as seen

(over)

not only through the eyes of the Vietnamese themselves but of other allies and friends as well. This does not mean that we should not make the effort (since we will frequently be damned whether we have made the effort or not), only that we should be clear about the risks and responsibilities entailed for us therein.

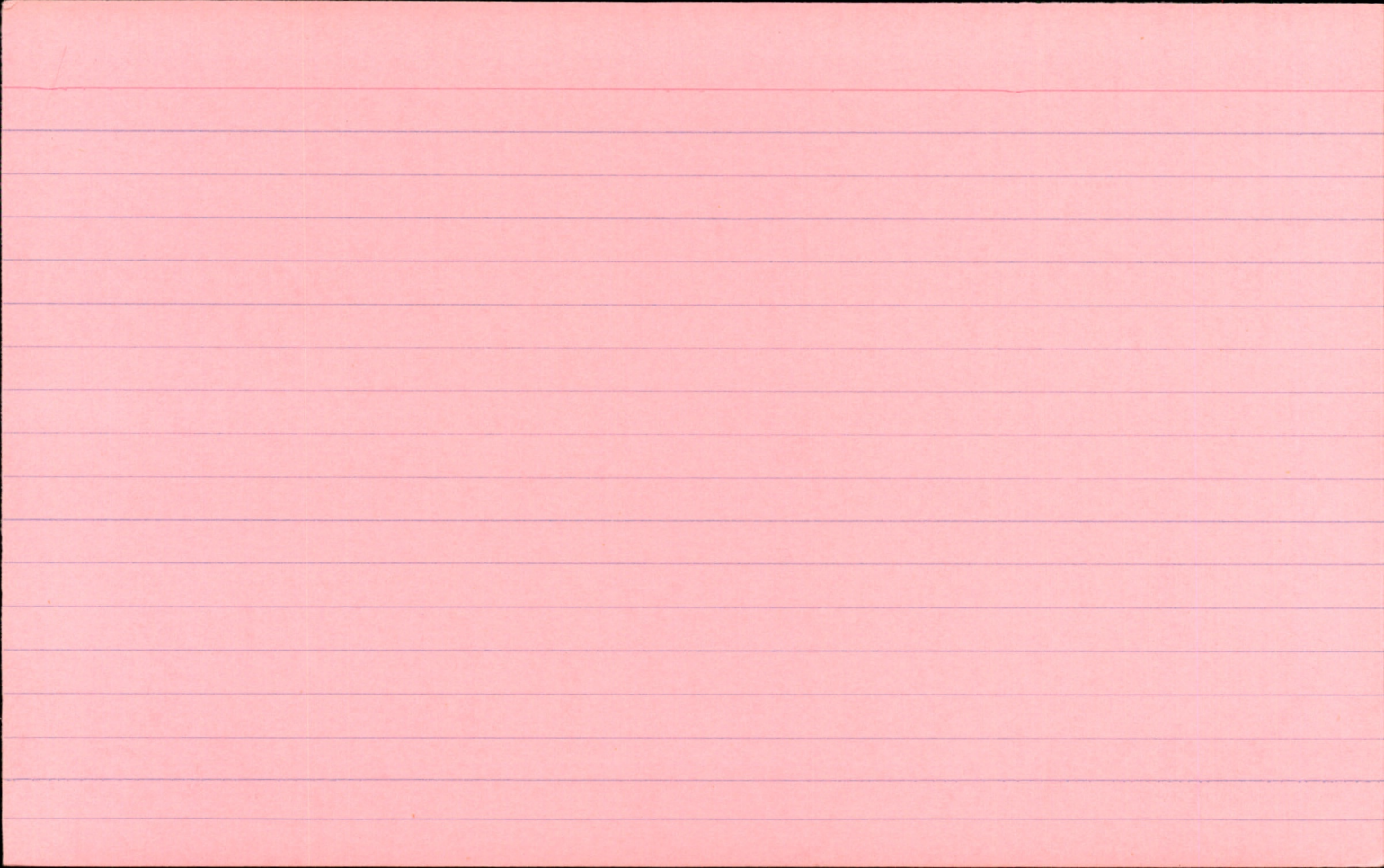
VIETNAMIZATION p. 351 OSD

paraphrased

Allies must raise troops to 1.5 million to assure attrition unacceptable to enemy.
"We cannot win either"

p.365 Enemy determines enemy attrition.

No relationship between Allied operations on either enemy or US deaths



MACV estimates that the enemy's ~~tactical~~ gains & losses in SVN roughly balanced out for the year of 1968. If it is assumed that the enemy can infiltrate & recruit approx. 300,000 men a year, then allied forces would have to attrit the enemy at the rate of 25,000 per month. Present operations (those since Sept to Dec. 1968) have attrited an average of about 18,000 per month. This difference of 7,000 men per month is not because the allied force level is inadequate, but because the enemy chooses not to engage.

The enemy has access to sufficient manpower to meet his replenishment needs for at least the next several years, even at the high 1968 loss rate of 89,000-

over

Even at the all time high enemy loss rates (340,000 annual rate) during the first 6 months of 1968, the Viet Cong (VC) / NVA could replenish their forces for more than 4 yrs. by depleting 33% of their joint pool of able bodied manpower.

At 4th quarter 1968 rates, VC/NVA infiltration and recruitment is running about 170,000 per year & so are enemy losses, ... the enemy can maintain this rate of losses almost indefinitely without any sig. depletion of his total manpower pool.

Attrition - rate
how long?

Assuming that the NVA replenish VC losses after the VC run out of manpower, it would take 13 years to ~~ex~~ exhaust the manpower pool, 6.5 yrs to cut it in half, or 4.4 yrs. to deplete it by a third.

moreover, it is unlikely that the high enemy loss rates of Jan. -- June 1968 could be maintained by allied forces unless: (1) the enemy generates massive Tet offensive type attacks; (2) allied forces become much more efficient & effective; and/or (3) allied force levels are increased greatly.

enemy calculates casualties - strong relationship bet. the level of attacks & the level of enemy casualties.

Withdrawal ~~the~~ a stalemate

rel bet allied operations & enemy casualties: - Kill ratio 360
casualties

Unfortunately, there is little or no relationship between the tempo of allied operations & fluctuations in enemy (or US) combat deaths.

Thus, unless allied commanders can wrest the initiative from him, the enemy can be expected to control his losses within a broad range.

- to attrit - "it would take more than 3 million allied troops to raise the early rate of 340,000 enemy losses, assuming the enemy continues to avoid contact & allied efficiency remains constant."

Unlikely enemy combat death rate per 1000 allied troops would increase as more troops were added 364

In terms of total armed man, the allies outnumbered the enemy about 6 to 1 at the end of 1968, but the allies had only a slight advantage over the enemy in terms of combat troops on offensive operations. or 1

25% allied troops tied down protecting key areas, lines of communication

& pacification ~~of~~ operations - enemy's small logistic & defensive requirements -

As a result, allied forces committed to offensive operations only slightly outnumber the enemy troops in maneuver battalions; in terms of rifle platoon manpower the 2 sides are nearly equal.

- casualty rates of allies

365

Statistical analysis supports the hypothesis that the enemy exercises the greatest share in the control of the rate of enemy attrition. The allies never have persistently imposed significant losses on enemy forces when he has sought to avoid them.

Little or no relationship exists between the tempo of allied operations and fluctuations in either enemy or US combat deaths. A significant increase in allied operations is not accompanied by a significant increase in enemy or allied combat deaths, nor does a reduction in allied operations reduce deaths.

Allies & VC → mobile offensive operation

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.... Despite an increase in the level of mobile, offensive operations during 1968, approx. 85% of all contacts in SVN are initiated by the enemy --- Furthermore, VC & NV use A forces can still freely strike most areas in SVN, though with the risk of incurring increased losses over 1967